

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 01837 041029Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5533

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 1837

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AORG, IT

SUBJECT: USIS PERSONNEL REDUCTIONS

1. THIS IS IN RESPONSE TO YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 20 ON THIS SUBJECT. I MET WITH SHIRLEY JANUARY 26. HIS DEPUTY THEN VISITED MILAN AND TURIN WITH PERSONNEL FROM USIS ROME. ON JANUARY 30 WE HAD ANOTHER MEETING AT WHICH TIME I ACCEPTED A REDUCTION OF 28 SLOTS FOR ALL OF USIS ITALY. THIS MEANS A REDUCTION OF 22 PERSONS SINCE 6 SLOTS ARE VACANT. OF THIS TOTAL ONLY TWO OR THREE WILL INVOLVE FIRINGS. THE OTHERS WILL CONCERN PERSON BEING RETIRED. FINALLY, SEVERAL POSITIONS WILL BE TEMPORARILY COVERED BY CONTRACTS FOR SPECIFIC SERVICES.

2. I CONSIDER THAT I HAVE ACCEPTED ABSOLUTE MAXIMUM REDUCTIONS CONSONANT WITH MY RESPONSIBILITIES. USIA HAS PROMISED TO PROVIDE TOPFLIGHT PERSONNEL TO REINFORCE OUR OPERATION BY OPENING BRANCH POSTS. GIVEN THE VERY TIGHT TIME FRAME IN WHICH WE ARE WORKING THESE ADDITIONS WILL BE OF VALUE ONLY IF THE INDIVIDUALS ARRIVE WITH FLUENT COMMAND OF THE LANGUAGE AND A RECENT BACKGROUND IN ITALY. ON THE JOB TRAINING OF PERSONNEL NO MATTER HOW BRIGHT THEY MAY BE WILL NOT DO THE TRICK. NOT ONLY DO THE AMERICANS PRODUCE LITTLE UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES BUT THE ITALIAN EMPLOYEES WHO MUST BREAK THEM IN DO NOT PRODUCE UP TO STANDARD. VOLPE

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